Remarks

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections and rejections set forth in the above-mentioned Official Action in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-13 are now pending in the application. Claims 1-3 are independent and Claims 1-13 have been amended. Claims 14-16 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

The drawings were objected to because Figure 1 included a reference numeral not mentioned in the description. In response, the specification was amended to include reference numeral 6. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to the drawings are respectfully requested

The specification was objected because of informalities. In response, the specification was amended to correct the typographical errors noted by the Examiner. In addition, other changes have been made after a careful review of the specification. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to the specification are respectfully requested.

The specification was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, for being replete with terms which are not clear, concise and exact. In response, the specification was amended to revise language that may have been unclear, inexact or verbose. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection to the specification are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-5, 8-10, 12, and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,109,746 (Jeanmaire et al.) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,234,625 (Wen), and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,398,357 (Holloway et al.). Claim 6 was rejected under § 103 as being unpatentable over Jeanmaire et al., Wen, and Holloway et al., in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,059,407 (Komatsu et al.). Claim 7 was rejected under § 103 as being unpatentable over Jeanmaire et al., Wen, and Holloway et al., in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,318,853 (Asano et al.). Claim 11 was rejected under § 103 as being unpatentable over Jeanmaire et al., Wen, and Holloway et al., in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,623,816 (Tanikawa et al.). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

With regards to Claim 1, the Office Action relies on Jeanmaire et al. to disclose applying a first material (ink precursors, column 2, lines 8-12), a second material (agent, column 3, lines 5-10), and an ink (ink, column 3, lines 19-20) to an intermediate transfer medium. However, the ink precursors relied on as teaching a first material do not increase the wettability of the surface of the intermediate transfer medium, and are not applied before the second material and the ink are applied. Rather, the ink precursors are not applied before the ink, but as an alternative to an ink application (inks or ink precursors, column 2, lines 5-14). If the fluid delivered by the printhead is an ink precursor, and not an ink, then the fluid will react with the intermediate transfer medium to form the final inks (column 3, lines 37-40), and no other ink application occurs. Therefore, Jeanmaire et al. does not disclose or suggest the application of a first and second material to an intermediate transfer medium before the application of the ink.

Jeanmaire et al. also does not disclose the application of a first material to increase the wettability of the surface of the intermediate transfer medium. The only material applied to the surface of the intermediate transfer medium before an ink is an agent that decreases the wetting of the surface (column 3, lines 5-9). The reference must be read in its entirety, as a whole, including sections that teach away from the present invention. Jeanmaire et al. teaches away from the present invention by applying only one material before the ink or any constituent of the ink, and this material decreases the wettability of the surface, rather than increasing the wettability. The Office Action has not shown any teaching of an application, before the application of an ink, of a liquid that increases the wettability of the surface to which the liquid is applied, as recited in Claims 1 and 2. Jeanmaire et al. also does not teach the application of a first liquid containing a surfactant to an intermediate transfer medium having a surface containing at least one material from among a fluororubber and a silicone rubber, as recited in Claim 3.

The Office Action relies on Wen to disclose the application of materials before the application of inks. However, Wen does not overcome the deficiencies of Jeanmaire et al. as discussed above. Wen teaches the application of the single material before the application of inks (Figure 3, fluid dispensing roller 120, column 2, lines 64-67). Wen does not disclose the application of a liquid that increases the wettability of the surface of an intermediate transfer medium as recited in Claims 1 and 2, and does not disclose the application of a first and second liquid to an intermediate transfer medium before the application of the ink, as recited in Claims 1, 2 and 3. Further, Wen also does

not teach the application of a first liquid containing a surfactant to an intermediate transfer medium having a surface containing at least one material from among a fluororubber and a silicone rubber, as recited in Claim 3.

Finally, the Office Action relies on Holloway et al. to disclose the materials to be applied include wetting agents. Holloway et al. does not overcome the deficiencies of Jeanmaire et al. as discussed above. The wetting agents of Holloway et al. are included in the ink, and therefore cannot be applied before the application of the ink, much less before the application of the second liquid for decreasing the flowability of an ink. Therefore, Holloway et al. does not teach applying a first liquid for increasing the wettability of a surface of an intermediate transfer medium to the intermediate transfer medium as recited in Claims 1 and 2, or applying ink to the intermediate transfer medium, to which a first liquid and second liquid have been applied as recited in Claims 1, 2 and 3. Further, Holloway et al. also does not teach the application of a first liquid containing a surfactant to an intermediate transfer medium having a surface containing at least one material from among a fluororubber and a silicone rubber, as recited in Claim 3.

Accordingly, without conceding the propriety of the combination, Jeanmaire et al., Wen, and Holloway et al. fail to disclose or suggest important features of the present invention recited in the independent claims.

Thus, independent Claims 1-3 are patentable over the citations of record. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 103 rejections are respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the present invention is patentably defined by independent Claims 1-3. Dependent Claims 4-13 are also allowable, in their own right, for defining features of the present invention in addition to those recited in their respective independent claims. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is requested.

Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the objections and rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowability are requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

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